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# Chinese Student Perceptions on English as a Second Language

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**Chinese Student Perceptions on English as a Second Language Teachers**

by

Yue Cheng (程玥)

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

St Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts in

English: Teaching English as a Second Language

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### **Abstract**

Job descriptions in China oversimplified hiring requirements for English as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) teachers. Anyone with a passport from any English-speaking core countries could be more qualified for the teaching jobs in China than someone with years of teaching experience, but without a passport from English speaking core countries. As the main body of learning, students' perceptions of ESL teachers play an important role in regulating the hiring process. Besides their nationalities and being native speakers, are there any other essential requirements for being an ESL teacher in China?

The aims of this study were to explore student perceptions on ESL or EFL teachers in China in terms of native languages, countries or regions, whether TESL degrees were earned, the presence of English teaching experiences, and races. The researcher predicted that the biased job qualifications could be the results of students' bias to teacher candidates. However, the researcher found that the student perceptions based on the survey does not perfectly match the job qualifications for ESL teachers in China.

*Keywords:* English teachers, student perceptions, hiring practices, China

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“Teachers are made, not born”

-- David Wees

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Introduction and Problem Statement

A general preference on native language educators over non-native language teachers persist currently while the debate of NNESTs (Non-native English-speaking teachers) and NESTs (Native English-speaking teachers) has continued over the decades. The discussions of linguistic discrimination have not succeeded in influencing the hiring practice of language educators in regions in East Asia, such as China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, etc. Most of the English teaching positions in the region have been known to heavily prefer NESTs. Meanwhile, school administrators believe that the key competencies for a language teacher are their first languages, as opposed to their linguistic experiences or their classroom management skills. On February 23rd, 2015, the following two job offers were found by the researcher in *www.tealit.com*, a popular language learning and teaching forum in Taiwan.

- 1) Position: ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher  
Location: Taipei, Taiwan.  
We are looking for experienced teachers who are capable of both lower and higher-level teaching for the Spring Semester [...]. All qualified Native English-Speaking teachers may apply; Western, American-born Chinese, Canadian-born Chinese etc...;
- 2) Position: Native English teacher.  
Location: Taipei City & Taipei County.  
Native English Judge Wanted. Well-Established schools [...]. Teachers must have a passport from a native speaking country, be flexible in their teaching methods, have good classroom and time management skills.

While searching for English teaching jobs on a website regarding teaching in Taiwan, the researcher found out that there are 26 out of 54 positions that require NEST candidates. The requirements as detailed in the 26 advertisements oversimplified the process of selecting ESL teacher candidates, using languages e.g.: “Passport holders from USA, CAN, UK, IRE, SA, AUS, or NZ, bachelor’s Degree (in any discipline) ...whose first language IS ENGLISH... ALL

Native English-speaking Accents WELCOME!” (Current, 2015) These requirements have raised doubts on the evaluation process of teacher candidates. Some of which are detailed subsequently.

To begin with, passport holders from the U.S.A. could possibly grow up in a community where English is not the language primarily spoken. In fact, English is not an official language at the federal level, as well as in many states of the U.S.A. “A majority of Americans support the idea of making English the official language. In some states this support has been translated into policy, while in others it has not.” (Schildkraut, 2001, p.445) “Many US citizens do not speak English natively” according to U.S. Census Bureau (Detailed Language Spoken...for States: 2009-2013, 2015). The 2011 American Community Survey (ACS) released by the U.S. Census Bureau provides some basic information about speakers of non-English languages and their English-speaking ability. “Of 291.5 million people aged 5 and over, 60.6 million people (21 percent of this population) spoke a language other than English at home” (Ryan, 2013, p2-3). As a result, a passport holder of the U.S.A., who may not be fluent in English, can fulfill the requirements of teaching English in the job postings above.

Secondly, according to respective laws of the countries, a person eligible for passports of the U.S.A., Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Australia, or New Zealand could possibly be raised in another country where English is not used at all, and therefore, does not speak English natively.

Consequently, “native” English accents could be hard to define. Some desired passport countries have multiple official languages. For example, South Africa has 11 official languages (“The World Factbook: SOUTH AFRICA”, 2017). In Canada both French and English are official (Official Languages Act, 1974). As a result, many passport holders of those countries

may be proficient in multiple languages and speak a variant of English influenced by other languages they speak. Could the English they speak be considered “native”? If so, why are proficient English speakers from other countries excluded? If not, how could one justify the English speakers of the passport countries as being “native” speakers?

The researcher holds an opinion that NNESTs should not be considered disadvantageous due to their first languages. The TESOL International Association strongly opposes discrimination against non-native English speakers in the field of English language teaching. As a result, all educators should be assessed under an objective criterion. The TESOL Statement on Nonnative Speakers of English and Hiring Practices (TESOL, 1992) states:

Whereas TESOL is an international association concerned with the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and composed of professionals who are both native and nonnative speakers of English, and whereas employment decisions in this profession which are based solely upon the criterion that an individual is or is not a native speaker of English discriminate against well qualified individuals, [...] therefore be it resolved that the Executive Board and the Officers of TESOL shall make every effort to prevent such discrimination in the employment support structures operated by TESOL and its own practices, [and shall work] toward the creation and publication of minimal language proficiency standards that may be applied equally to all ESOL teachers without reference to the native-ness of their English. (p. 23)

Instead of requiring “native English speakers” in the job postings, a more objective criteria would be leveraging other assessment options, such as the TOEFL iBT test or other English proficiency level tests.

Moussu (2006) identified the problem ten years ago on the website of the Chronicle of Higher Education on October 9, 2004. Requirements on non-teaching positions were also found to discriminate non-native English speakers, utilizing phrases such as “Any college graduate or student (native English speakers only) may apply”, or “Be a native speaker of English.”

Conversely, on Feb. 25, 2015, while researching job openings on the website of the Chronicle of

Higher Education utilizing “native speaker” as a keyword, “Possession of native-speaker fluency in spoken and written English” is found under the requirement of job postings rather than “native speakers or passport holders”.

The author acknowledges the significant achievements toward an equal opportunity for TESOL job applicants in the U.S over the years. It is now easier for NNESTs to access the job markets in the U.S. However, whether a teacher candidate speaks English as their first language is a significant factor in hiring English teachers in East Asia.

The objective of this study is to investigate students’ perceptions on NESTs and NNESTs in China. The research will explore the students’ preferences and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs. Students are chosen to be the participants since they are the recipient of English teaching. To discover the rationale behind the requirements preferring native English speakers, a Likert scale is involved in the questionnaires.

### **Research Question**

The research focuses on students’ perspectives on:  
What are some of the Chinese students’ perceptions of what makes a good English Teacher?

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter two defines the terms non-native speakers (NNSs) and native speakers (NSs). This chapter also elaborates on the connection between racism and language discrimination. Next, the history of English teaching in China from pre-1919 to now is introduced by dividing the timeframe into four periods. The chapter also elaborates on the current hiring practices of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) in China, and the student perceptions of NNESTs in the U.S.A., Spain and Hong Kong. Finally, this chapter introduces the concept of “core countries” and “non-core countries”.

### Definition of NNS and NS

Crystal’s (2003a) *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* provides a simple definition of the native speaker:

A term used in linguistics to refer to someone for whom a particular language is a first language or mother tongue. The implication is that this native language, having been acquired naturally during childhood, is the one about which a speaker will have the most reliable intuitions, and whose judgments about the way the language is used can therefore be trusted. (p. 308)

Nayar (1994) provides further details to the definition above. He describes the defining features of a native speaker as “any or all of the following in any combination, with different components assuming prominence according to exigencies and demands of the particular context” (p.1): Sequence, Competence, Culture, Identity, Environment, and Politics. Liu (1999b) supplemented Nayar in the following ways:

- Sequence (is English learned first before other languages?)
- Competence (is English our most competent language as compared to other languages?)
- Culture (what cultures are we most affiliated with?)

- Identity (who do we prefer to be recognized as under different circumstances?)
- Environment (did we grow bilingually or trilingually?)
- Politics (why should we label NNSs and NSs in a dichotomy instead of viewing it on a continuum?). (pp. 163-4)

The key differentiation to NNS and NS is based on their personal history as brought up by Liu: “We cannot distinguish the non-native speaker from the native speaker except by autobiography” (p. 213). He identified the following characteristics:

- Native speaker by birth (that is, by early childhood exposure),
- Native-speaker (or native-speaker-like) by being an exceptional learner,
- Native speaker through education using the target-language medium (the lingua franca case),
- Native speaker by virtue of being a native user (the post-colonial case), and
- Native speaker through long residence in the adopted country. (p. 214)

### **Racism and Language Discrimination in TESL**

*The Merriam-Webster online dictionary* (2017) defines racism as “racial prejudice or discrimination”.

The Legal Aid Society (2002) mentions the definition of language discrimination as:

Language discrimination occurs when a person is treated differently because of that person’s native language or other characteristics of that person’s speech. In an employment situation, for example, an employee may be being subjected to language discrimination if the workplace has a “speak-English-only” policy but the employee’s primary language is something other than English. The employee may also be the victim of language discrimination if he or she is treated less favorably than other employees because he or she speaks English with an accent, or if the employee is told he or she does not qualify for a position because of a lack of English proficiency. Outside the

employment context, language discrimination may also occur if a person is denied access to businesses or government services because he or she does not speak English.

Many researchers pointed out the privilege of NSs and the oppression to NNSs in hiring practices: “An example of racism is the practices of hiring English teachers worldwide. It has been pointed out that native speakers of English have a privileged status in employment, a privilege that is increased by having White skin.” (Kubota and Lin, 2006, p479) The perception that NSs are the dominant linguistic model, as well as the perception that they are the only ideal teachers of English is a major problem acknowledged in the TESOL field.

Another issue brought up by Kubota and Lin (2006, p481) is “the essentialized dichotomy (i.e. native speaker = standard English speaker = White, versus nonnative speaker = nonstandard English speaker = non-White) has tended to blind us to the discrimination experienced by teachers who do not fit this formula (e.g. Asian or Black native speaker of English, White native speaker with southern U.S. accent)”. Walelign’s (1986) “Non-Native Speakers Need Not Apply” documented that the hiring processes NNSs face have been unfair for as long as 30 years.

Ganagarajah (1999) states that 80% of the world's English language teachers are NNSs. In 1996, the colloquium titled “In Their Own Voices: Nonnative Speaker Professionals in TESOL” at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual TESOL Convention held in Chicago marks the beginning of the NNS movement which is a significant change for NNESTs in TESOL.

Braine (2010) pointed out two ironic phenomena in English language teaching. First, NNESTs with rich multicultural experience are barred from the same classes where multiculturalism brought by ESL students is highly praised. Second, upon returning to their countries or regions, such as Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong after obtaining degrees and teacher



qualification professional development in the English-speaking, NNESTs find themselves in an awkward situation where they could not find teaching jobs, as language program administrators would rather hire unqualified NESTs than qualified NNESTs.

In 1998, George Braine, Jun Liu and Lia Kamhi-Stein established the Non-Native English Speakers in TESOL (NNEST) Caucus (Kamhi-Stein, 1999). The first formal meeting of the Caucus was held in 1999. According to Braine (2010), the goals of the meeting were to create a “nondiscriminatory professional environment” for NNEST, and to strengthen effective teaching and learning English around the world while respecting individuals’ language rights.

Ten years later, a surge in academic research and publications on NNEST-related issues, as well as a growth of leadership in TESOL reflect the achievement of NNESTs. The surge also demonstrates a rise of self-esteem among NNESTs. Though, in 2017, NNESTs are still facing the same challenges. A safe and non-discriminatory working environment can only be created after the keys to the problem are found.

### **Background Information About NEST in China: History of Teaching EFL in China**

**English teaching before 1919.** “Formal education in EFL was initiated by two groups of people in the late Qing Dynasty: Western missionaries' and Chinese reformers. They worked separately with totally different aims in mind. The English-speaking missionaries regarded English as the essential path through which they could bring the souls of Chinese to God.” (Yang, 2002, p 1) “Another group of people who promoted EFL training in China was the reformers of the Qing Government as a result of the Opium Wars.” (Yang, 2002, p 2) “By 1915, the United States had gradually become the most important site for Chinese students seeking

modern academic training abroad. Many Chinese professors had received their academic training abroad and had returned to transmit their knowledge acquired in the West.” (Yang, 2002, p 3)

**English teaching in the Republican Period (1919-1949).** A considerable number of Westerners, missionaries or non-missionaries, were also invited to teach in China. In 1923, statistics showed that the Chinese faculty to foreign faculty ratio in the Chinese universities was 1:1. (Porter, 1990). The Kuomintang, Chinese Nationalists Party's success in uniting China in 1927 created an upsurge of nationalism across the country. Time allotted to foreign language study was reduced in the national curriculum as foreign languages were considered an element of disunity. However, urban students were still willing to spend time and money learning English for the economic benefits and opportunities that English could bring (Ross, 1993).

“In mission colleges, there was an emphasis on conversation and composition. English was almost always taught by native speakers.” (Yang, 2002, p 5) “English teaching during this period varied greatly across the country. The objectives set in the curriculum revealed, to some extent, the objectives of the new educational system, e.g., building up students’ interests and learning English through daily practice.” (Yang, 2002, p 7) Teaching methods and instructional materials in the coastal areas, especially in missionary schools, helped to bring authentic language use to students.

**English teaching in the Socialist Revolutionary Period (1949-1978).** English teaching during these 30 years yielded very low quality in students’ overall language proficiency owing to politics and ideology that dominated the entire curriculum at all levels of schooling.

By 1952, all foreign-run schools and higher institutions were taken over by the communist government, merged or dissolved in the reorganization process. Few Westerners

remained to teach in China (Yang, 2002, p 8). English teaching was mainly limited to some specialized foreign language institutions (Zhang, 1984).

The teaching of English experienced a short period of revival in the early 1960s (Fu, 1986). In 1964, English was designated to be the first foreign language in China. However, it did not last very long. Most schools stopped teaching English after Mao Zedong launched the unprecedented Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1966. Foreign classic literature was burned or stored away; contemporary literature was banned from importing; foreign newspapers, radio, and movies were considered forbidden (Fu, 1986).

After the Cultural Revolution, English became a popular foreign language in 1977 when foreign language took its place in the school curriculum as a required course (Zuo, 2008). As revealed in the national college entrance examination: the vocabulary required was only 600-800 words. The exam tests only on the skills of grammar selection, reading comprehension, and translation. Skills of speaking and writing communication are not included in the exam (Barendsen, 1979). Chinese students and teachers were described as having more competence in grammar and reading comprehension than oral communication as a foreign teacher has commented (Porter, 1990, p.49).

**Foreign English teachers teaching in China today.** During the 1978-2007 period, China's policy steered toward reforming and opening up. "Bringing in" and "going out" policies are both carried out. Joint or sole foreign ventures parachuted what are called foreign experts into the country. State-sponsored study trips of large numbers of key personnel and talent in the areas of science and technology were directed toward the developed world. According to the data on April 2, 2008 from education department in China, 1.21 million people have studied abroad

during 1978-2007 (Cheng, 2009). English language education has followed a similar trend. For instance, hundreds of ELT (English Language Teaching) specialists from Western English-speaking countries have been invited to teach at universities and schools across the country (Ouyang, 2003). The significant number of English language teachers have joined the exodus of the million strong Chinese students and scholars to study abroad due to their English language advantage. (Cheng, 2009).

Huhua Ouyang (2003) found that university students from Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in Guangzhou, China had much criticism about their native English-speaking foreign teachers and their teaching. “The most frequent complaint was the lack of systematic organization and linearity in the foreign teachers’ classes, which resulted in a lack of a sense of achievement for the students (pp. 127). “A department head remarked: The most common complaints from students is that foreign experts like to talk wild in their teaching, from the south of the earth to the north of the sky; they improvise too much, and this makes it difficult for students to prepare for their teaching. This is especially frustrating for those good students; we all know that they want to take detailed notes from the lessons. Without that, they felt they had not got anything useful (pp. 128).” Students also complained about the “fun” style of teaching. They were not comfortable or felt humiliated by the singing and dancing activities in foreign teachers’ class, which they typically do in kindergarten (pp. 129).

Another complaint from students was that the foreign teachers were not devoting much time on correcting their writing mistakes. The foreign teachers usually distanced themselves from textbooks, which play a centric role in learning and teaching in China. “Our teachers like to use materials composed from only they know where, in bits and pieces, and we get worried about

what can be learned from such materials since most of them don't seem to have a coherent or consistent theme or subject. In fact, very often they are just what the foreign teachers are interested in themselves" said by a student in the research by Ouyang (2003, pp. 131).

The one most strongly expressed by the informants from Guangdong University of Foreign Studies was the "biased" grading criteria. As explained by a student participant, some foreign teachers give grades in writing courses by the subject criteria, e.g., "creative", "interesting", "lack of opinions", and "not critical enough".

In reality, the quality of teaching and their results varies. According to a study in Beijing Language and Culture University, the number of teachers from other countries teaching languages in the Chinese University is raising specially after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The researchers interviewed 20 foreign teachers from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, French, Spanish, Italy, Japan, and South Korea. All of the foreign teachers including NESTs earned bachelor's degrees. At the same time, 10 Chinese teachers are interviewed on their perceptions towards foreign teachers. The researchers analyzed 182 valid questionnaires from student participants. The conclusion from the results is as followed:

1. The criteria of hiring foreign teachers is simpler than hiring local teachers. Professional knowledge is not required. Often, being a native speaker is the only important criteria. The researchers suggest reconsidering the standard of hiring teachers.
2. Some forms of communication, for example, staff meetings, or online forums, between local and foreign teachers will greatly benefit the student population. Foreign teachers expressed the needs of more frequent and more channels of communication with other

teachers. According to the teachers, the local cooperating teachers cannot be the only resource for supporting foreign teachers.

3. More guidelines, resources, and knowledge of students during staff orientation would be helpful to foreign teachers. Some of the teachers adapt well with the total freedom of teaching, whereas others who do not have a background in teaching are highly unprepared and unorganized.
4. Improved curriculum design with cooperation among teachers. According to the study, the lesson plans, learning goals, as well as textbooks are determined by the foreign teachers themselves. As a result, students occasionally ended up with repeated topics, contents, or activities, and often found themselves lacking supporting instructions to complete assignments. (Gong, Dai & Tan, 2014).

At the same time, there are a number of foreign language teachers who teach English for the intent of earning travel expenses. A great amount of them do not have any TEFL credentials or degrees in Linguistics before they teach. Zhang & Wang (2005) state that as high as 59.5% of NESTs in the higher education system of Shaanxi province do not have any language learning or teaching experiences. 54% of NESTs earned bachelor's degrees. However, they are coming from non-related professions e.g. football coaches, business management, etc. Only 5.4% of them earned teaching licenses. The author pointed out that they are mostly teaching for working experiences or for covering their travel expenses. Among these teachers, 51.4% have not committed to a time to teach in China, and 32.4% plan to teach for only one year. The job positions have high turnaround rates. The article concluded that NESTs in China do not have much career planning and do not stay in the same position long term (2005).

The fact has been echoed by an article: “What Do Foreign Oral English Teachers in China Actually Teach?” on a website called Foreign Teachers’ Guide to Living and Working in China. Foreign oral English teachers are often left alone to design their curriculum and lesson plans. College and university administrators often do not support nor supervise what is being taught in the classroom. For example, it is acceptable for a foreign English Teacher to ramble about his Chinese girlfriend in class as long as he reports to work regularly, appear relatively sober and not being complained by students. As a result, the basic standard for being a foreign language teacher is not actively being complained (Middle Kingdom Life, 2010, November 06).

According to a study by (Yang, 2013, pg.37), students reported that some foreign teachers do not act professionally while teaching. For example, some teachers organize too many naïve games that take much time in class. Students also feel that attending their classes is a waste of time because of the casualness of content, which is irrelevant to teaching materials.

### **Hiring Practices and Compliance to Regulations in China**

The problematic and questionable hiring practices call for the research and reforms of the requirements for foreign teacher employment in China. In the article (Zoe L. & Aaron L., 2015), many schools require that their foreign teachers to earn bachelor’s degrees since the Chinese government requires it. However, the article states that in 2012, a Canadian man called David received the job offer from a teaching agency in Qingdao, China even though he had made it clear that he has not earned a bachelor’s degree. The agency responded that the degree was not necessary to secure a teaching position.

Nonetheless, David was rejected by the Qingdao school the agency applied on his behalf on the grounds that he lacked proper qualification. Being a for-profit agency, the loss of teacher

would mean the loss of potential profit. David was sent to Shanghai where he was able to teach illegally with a tourist visa.

Many English teachers in Chinese schools sign contracts with for-profit hiring agencies instead of directly with their schools. A commission would be paid to the agencies for each teacher placement. Since some provinces require ESL teachers to be native English speakers, the placement agencies often hire NNESTs from countries such as France, Germany, or Cuba, and then pressure the teachers to lie about their countries of origin.

The following is what Zoe Leavitt and Aaron Lee found about on reality of English teachers working in China (2015):

“In one school we have to be American, in another Canadian,” said Nadia, a South African who has taught illegally in China for four years. “Our identity gets taken away from us.” “In order to work as a teacher in China you need certain documents... I didn't have either, so [the agency] helped me to make it up. It was fake, of course,” wrote Arthur, a Russian who teaches at several public schools in Shanghai. “I'm not a native English speaker, so I have to pretend that I am.” Rooney says his company employed only two native speakers out of approximately 20 people on staff – and the agencies often force even native English speakers to lie, to fill the gap between the type of teacher the company promised it would provide and the less-qualified teacher who shows up. Nadia's boss forged a college diploma for her without her knowledge, and Doug, the Canadian teacher, said that his agency requires him to tell the school that he had a linguistics degree. Doug, who had never taught before a company placed him in a Shanghai elementary school, was also instructed to inform the school that he had extensive experience



teaching high-schoolers, “so that would explain why I wasn't as good” at teaching in his first-grade classroom. (Leavitt & Lee, 2015).

The current hiring practices have not place enough emphasis to background checks. According to Alex who teaches at an International school in Beijing, he has never submitted any documents other than a resume to the employer. Some schools focus more on their foreign looks than their resume – as long as that person speaks English and looks like they are somewhat from the West. He said most of the foreign teachers in Beijing he knows never had background checks as part of a hiring procedure. A retired teacher from a middle school in Beijing reveals that many public and private schools see foreign teachers as a selling point to attract potential students and their parents (Liu Z., 2013, pg.35). It leads to a problem: persons linked to criminal cases would have no problem teaching English in China. In April 2013, South China Morning Post reported that a British man who had been wanted for questioning by the UK police in connection with child sex offences had been employed by Beijing World Youth Academy, an international school in Beijing (Luo, 2013).

### **Students' Perceptions in Other Countries and Regions**

According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, “perception” is “the process whereby sensory stimulation is translated into organized experience in humans. That experience, or percept, is the joint product of the stimulation and of the process itself. Individual differences in perceiving are based on age, sex and cultural influences (Dember, West, & Epstein, “Perception”, 2018)”.

Previous studies focused on student perceptions of native English speakers and non-native English speakers in the U.S.A., Spain, and Hong Kong. In a study conducted by

Lasagabaster, D and Sierra, J.M. (2002) in a university in Spain, participants clearly prefer NESTs in most areas including pronunciation, writing, reading, and speaking. In other areas such as grammar assessment, students feel that NESTs' teaching styles could be detrimental to them since there is a higher tolerance among NESTs in grammatical errors unless they impede communication. Students indicated that the relative tolerance of NESTs will not be helpful for grammar learning. (Sierra & Lasagabaster, 2002, pp.132-143)

Another study was conducted by Cheung (2002) over a ten-month period from May 2001 to February 2002 in seven universities in Hong Kong with 420 undergraduates and 22 teachers of English participating in the research. The findings: when it comes to English language learning, most students prefer to have NESTs. Others do not show any preferences towards the NESTs or the NNESTs. In addition, no students expressed directly that they would prefer to have the NNESTs.

The study of student perceptions in the United States by Moussu (2006) revealed a slightly different outcome. The study shows that not all ESL students hold negative attitudes towards NNESTs. In fact, except in a few cases, the positive responses given by students do not differ between the "Native" and "Non-Native" groups. At the same time, students taught by NNESTs appeared less prejudiced against NNESTs in general than students not taught by NNESTs. Third, negative attitudes towards teachers do not necessarily show a relationship with their "non-nativeness". Undeniably, students in the "Native" group do not always hold positive attitudes towards their NESTs either.

### **Core Country versus Non-Core Country**

The core countries in the research design refers to what Braine (2013) brought up as “inner circle” countries (Kachru, 1985). English as spoken in these countries are particularly considered as native English. Those countries are often listed specifically in the job requirement including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Ireland (Current, 2015). Conversely, non-core countries in this study refer to countries placed on the “outer circle”, e.g. India, Malaysia, and the Philippines, and countries placed on the “expanding circle”, e.g. China, Spain, and Italy in the Kachru “Three Circles of English” model.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter will present the background information about the participants, the rationales in designing, conducting the survey as well as analyzing the results.

#### **Participants**

The participants in this study were 200 students from Shanxi University Business College, Shanxi, China enrolled in English major taught by both NESTs and NNESTs. The university is an independent college, or non-governmental college in a medium sized city in China. The students have been studying English since elementary school and they are intermediate level English learners. All the participants are over 18-year-old.

#### **Research Design**

The methodology chosen for this project is based on three aspects of the project: the type of problem which is perceptions, attitudes and opinions; the goal of the research project which is to investigate the reasons behind oversimplified EL teacher job requirements and to raise awareness of linguistic discrimination; and the nature of the data which is quantitative. For this research, 200 students participated in a questionnaire, which consists of 16 fictional teacher profiles including a picture of the teachers.

To eliminate discrepancies in results caused by gender, all teachers provided in the questionnaire were females. The questionnaire (See APPENDIX A) is designed by the author based on the resume of 16 teacher candidates. Here is the teacher profile used in the study:

1. Education Background:
  - a. Master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language
  - b. Without Master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language

2. Teaching experience:
  - a. Less than three years
  - b. More than three years
3. Nationality:
  - a. Comes from one of the English-speaking core countries
  - b. Does not come from the core countries.
4. Native Language:
  - a. English
  - b. Non-English
5. Race:
  - a. Chinese Looking
  - b. White Looking
  - c. Others

The questionnaire uses random pictures from Google image search results of “female passport photo” and Chinese translation will be used for the survey since the participants are exclusively native speakers of Mandarin Chinese.

Nevertheless, availability of data collection needs to be considered as well. According to the goal of the research, one group of people will be involved in this research: undergraduate students in China who are learning English. There are also a number of control variables that might influence the outcome of the study. Examples of such variables are: the location and the number of the participants, the willingness of the administrators to help with the project, the time

and place which the participants have for the survey, the first language of the participants, and any unexpected problems that might occur along the way.

The nature of the data requires large number of participants. It is not feasible to have observations or interviews conducted for 200 people. To compare the responses given by these participants, a methodology is needed. “Quantitative data can be analyzed and displayed. Such data is also provided in helpful graphic displays such as bar graphs and pie charts” (Nunan and Bailey, 2009). The questionnaire was focused on students’ feelings about necessary experience and preferred experience as a teacher for English major in the university, including the ability to motivate students and teach test English, study abroad English, as well as conversational and writing skills.

All 7 questions required participants to express their opinion from extremely disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and extremely agree. The results will reflect how those variables influence students’ perceptions on NESTs and NNESTs. It will also provide guidelines for teacher development.

### **Procedures**

During the survey, the resumes are posted on the screen in the classroom. Participants gathered in the regular classes were given paper-based answer sheets with the 7 questions and 16 respond sheets for every teacher candidate. Four teachers were requested to conduct the process of responding to the questionnaires in different rooms. Participants are allocated 40 minutes to complete the questionnaires.

## Data Analysis

Personal information of the participants was not collected. “Teacher candidates” were grouped in five different ways, as shown below:

Table 3.1: Teacher's Credentials

<i>Teachers</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Core-country</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
<i>Native English speaker</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
<i>TESL Degree</i>	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
<i>Teaching Experience &gt;3yrs</i>	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
<i>Race</i>	C	W	O	W	C	O	O	W	O	W	O	C	C	C	W	W

*Legend:*

*Y: Yes    N: No    C: Chinese-looking    W: White    O: Others*

Labeling through race would provide more credit to biological features in this study than to any other factors in the hiring of English teachers. The following racial categories:

Chinese-looking, White, and Others were applied to teacher candidates. A Chinese-looking person would be identified as a person with similar facial features as the student participants. A White person would have facial features of a Caucasian, whereas Others would mean people with facial features that could not be placed into either Chinese or White categories.

Based on the literature review, school administrators and teacher recruiting agencies perceive skin color as an important criterion for recruitment. The researcher assumes that the student perceptions would be identical to school administrators and teacher recruiting agencies.

## Chapter 4: Results

In this chapter, several T-test and ANOVA tests are analyzed. The tests are used to determine if there was a significant difference in the means between:

- 1) NESTs and NNESTs,
- 2) The countries of origin of the teachers, whether they are from a core country or a non-core country.
- 3) Whether they have earned a TESL degree,
- 4) Whether they have at least three years of teaching experience,
- 5) The race of each candidates categorized into three categories (Chinese-looking, White, and Others).

There are seven questions (Q1-Q7) in the survey for each candidate. The questions are as followed:

Q1: This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.

Q2: This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.

Q3: This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.

Q4: I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.

Q5: This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.

Q6: This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.

Q7: This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.

An Independent T-test is used to compare the means of two different groups that is, the groups are independent from one another. T-tests were used to determine whether or not the differences in the means from the seven Likert style questions were statistically significant.



For the results to be valid, the means from the survey questions should remain consistent across the different surveys. The two-tailed result is considered in each analysis, as it provides a holistic view of the survey. In order to accept the survey results, a significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of less than 0.05 was used.

The null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) and the alternative hypotheses ( $H_A$ ) used during the tests are defined as below:

$H_0$ : There are no significance on the results. The results are not useful.

$H_A$ : There is a significant relationship between the results. The results are useful.

In order to accept the alternative hypothesis, the p-value shall be less than the significance level of 0.05. The value of the mean determines if a variable is significantly greater than the other. The higher mean value shows that the teacher with a particular credential (e.g., NEST vs. NNEST) is perceived as more attractive than the other by the students in the survey.

Twenty-eight T-tests were used to determine if there was a significant difference in the means between NESTs and NNESTs, whether they are from the core English speaking countries or non-core countries, whether they earned a TESL degree, whether they have at least three years of teaching experiences.

At the same time, 7 ANOVA tests were performed to determine if the race of each candidates, categorized into three categories (Chinese-looking, White, and Others), make a significant difference in the participants' preferences.

### **T-Test 1: NEST vs. NNEST**

Test 1 is performed to analyze whether NEST and NNEST makes a significant contribution to the survey response in the seven questions above. Table 4.1 shows the results of the T-test.

Table 4.1: NESTs vs. NNESTs T-Test Results

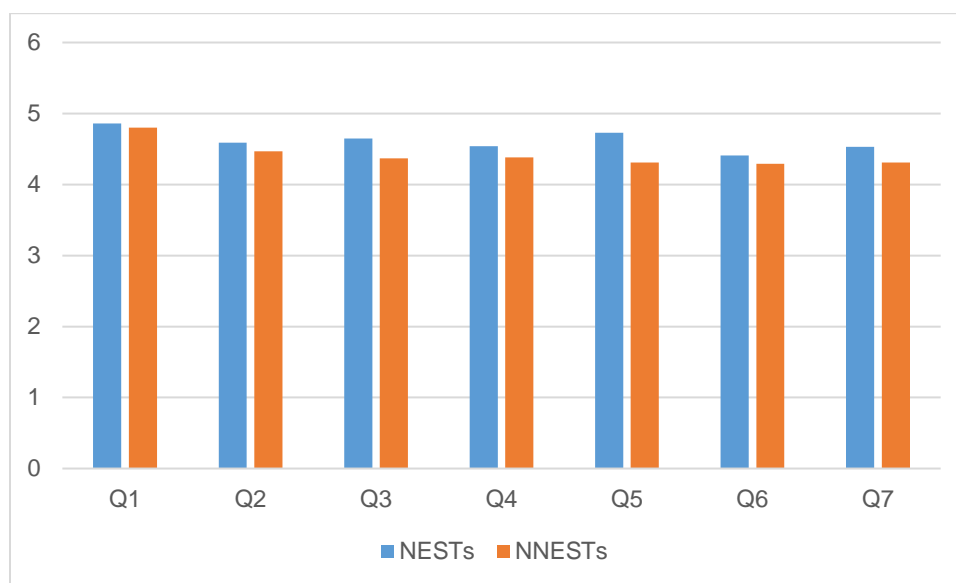
	<i>Native/ Non- native</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Q1</i>	NESTs	1600	4.86	1.029	.026	.098
	NNESTs	1595	4.80	1.085	.027	.098
<i>Q2</i>	NESTs	1599	4.59	.983	.025	.001
	NNESTs	1595	4.47	1.015	.025	.001
<i>Q3</i>	NESTs	1599	4.65	.993	.025	.000
	NNESTs	1593	4.37	1.070	.027	.000
<i>Q4</i>	NESTs	1599	4.54	1.049	.026	.000
	NNESTs	1592	4.38	1.070	.027	.000
<i>Q5</i>	NESTs	1600	4.73	1.057	.026	.000
	NNESTs	1593	4.31	1.109	.028	.000
<i>Q6</i>	NESTs	1599	4.41	1.023	.026	.001
	NNESTs	1594	4.29	1.072	.027	.001
<i>Q7</i>	NESTs	1598	4.53	1.135	.028	.000
	NNESTs	1595	4.31	1.224	.031	.000

The two-tailed T-test results showed that all p-values were less than .05 except for Question 1: This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher. Therefore, the results for Question 1 are not statistically significant. There were significant differences in the means of survey responses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 regarding NEST and NNEST, indicating that the null hypothesis for these questions must be rejected and the alternative hypothesis can be accepted.

From the data collected, participants do not think that being native or nonnative contributes to possess the necessary experience as an English teacher. However, participants believe that NESTs will perform better compare to NNESTs in preparing English tests, assisting participants

to study abroad, inspiring them to learn English, as well as improving communication skills and writing skills. Overall, participants believe that NESTs are better suited as English teachers in their university. The higher mean value shows that being native English speakers is perceived as more attractive than being non-native English speakers by the students in the survey.

Chart 4.1: NESTs vs NNESTs



A definite conclusion can be reached from the T-test and Chart 1 above the participants' preferences to native English speakers influence the selection of English teacher candidates. With only the information provided in CVs available to the participants, native English teacher candidates are more favorable among the participants than non-native candidates.

### **T-Test 2: Core Countries vs. Non-core Countries**

Test 2 is performed to analyze whether the candidate's home country contributes to the survey response in the seven questions above. Table 4.2 shows the results of the T-test.

Table 4.2: Core Countries vs. Non-Core Countries T-Test Results

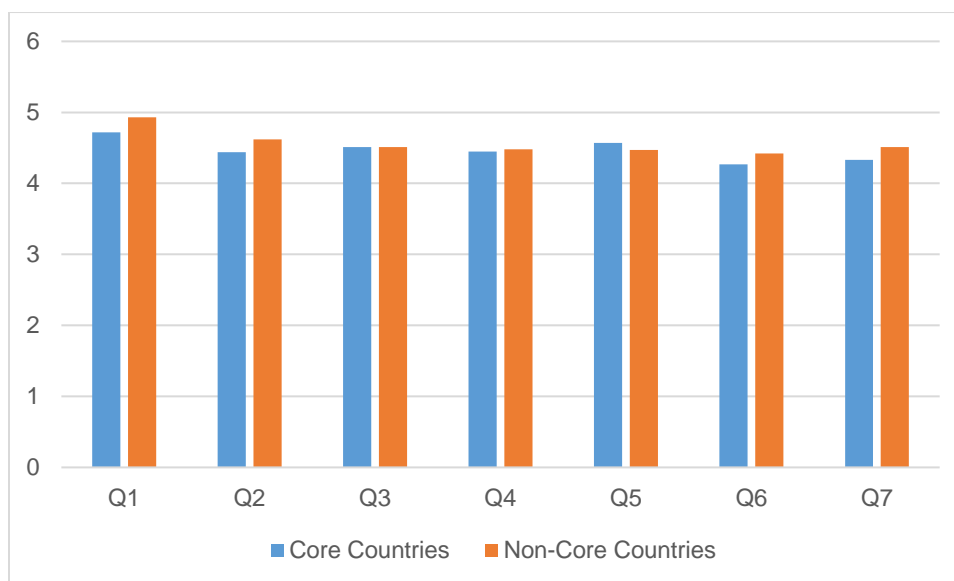
	Core/ Non-Core	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Q1	Core	1599	4.72	1.088	.027	.000
	Non-Core	1596	4.93	1.016	.025	.000
Q2	Core	1599	4.44	.999	.025	.000
	Non-Core	1595	4.62	.995	.025	.000
Q3	Core	1599	4.51	1.045	.026	.838
	Non-Core	1593	4.51	1.039	.026	.838
Q4	Core	1596	4.45	1.068	.027	.479
	Non-Core	1595	4.48	1.057	.026	.479
Q5	Core	1599	4.57	1.114	.028	.018
	Non-Core	1594	4.47	1.090	.027	.018
Q6	Core	1599	4.27	1.046	.026	.000
	Non-Core	1594	4.42	1.048	.026	.000
Q7	Core	1598	4.33	1.218	.030	.000
	Non-Core	1595	4.51	1.145	.029	.000

Like the first analysis, the two-tail T-test result was considered for the analysis. The T-test showed that all p-values were less than 0.05 except for Questions 3 and 4. The null hypothesis for this T-test is accepted for Questions 3 and 4 and rejected for other questions. Which means, the responses for Questions 3 and 4 are not statistically significant.

The participants believe that where teachers come from does not relate to whether or not they will help them with practicing speaking English abroad and their motivation to learn English. Responses to Questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 were accepted since the p-values meet the selection

criteria. From Question 1, we conclude that compared to teachers who are from core countries, teachers from non-core countries are more likely to have the necessary experience as a teacher. From Question 2, most of the participants agree that teachers from non-core countries will help prepare them to take English tests. Question 6, participants believe that teachers from non-core countries will be more likely to help improve their English writing skills. Questions 7, based on the participants' feedback, teachers from non-core countries are better suited as English teachers in their university. However, Question 5 reveals that teachers from core countries will be more likely to improve the participant's English conversation skills.

Chart 4.2: Core Countries vs. Non-core Countries



A conclusion can be reached from the T-test and Chart 2 above, the students' preferences to teacher candidates from the core English speaking countries influences the job requirements for ESL teachers. Based on the information provided on their CVs, the English teacher

candidates from non-core countries received more positive feedback from the participants than the candidates from core countries.

### 4.3 T-Test 3: TESL vs. Non-TESL Degrees

Test 3 is performed to analyze whether the candidates with a master's degree in teaching English as a Second Language contributes to the survey response in the seven questions above.

Table 4.3 shows the results of the T-test.

Table 4.3: TESL Degree vs. Non-TESL Degree T-Test Results

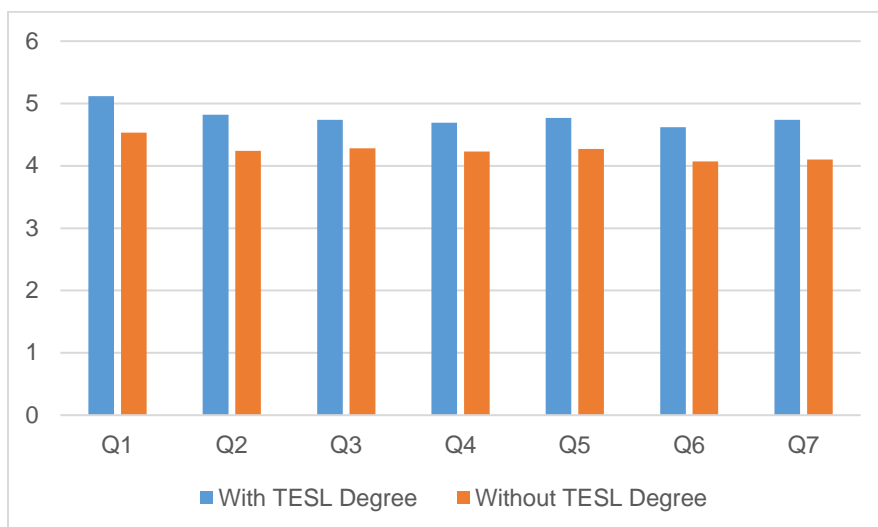
	<i>TESL Degree</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Q1</i>	Yes-TESL degree	1598	5.12	.928	.023	.000
	No-TESL degree	1597	4.53	1.097	.027	.000
<i>Q2</i>	Yes-TESL degree	1597	4.82	.903	.023	.000
	No-TESL degree	1597	4.24	1.008	.025	.000
<i>Q3</i>	Yes-TESL degree	1597	4.74	.955	.024	.000
	No-TESL degree	1595	4.28	1.073	.027	.000
<i>Q4</i>	Yes-TESL degree	1595	4.69	1.007	.025	.000
	No-TESL degree	1596	4.23	1.068	.027	.000
<i>Q5</i>	Yes-TESL degree	1597	4.77	1.009	.025	.000
	No-TESL degree	1596	4.27	1.134	.028	.000
<i>Q6</i>	Yes-TESL degree	1598	4.62	.967	.024	.000
	No-TESL degree	1595	4.07	1.057	.026	.000
<i>Q7</i>	Yes-TESL degree	1597	4.74	1.061	.027	.000
	No-TESL degree	1596	4.10	1.216	.030	.000

The two tailed T-test result shows that all p-values are less than 0.05, indicating that there are significant differences in means between candidates with TESL degrees and candidates

without TESL degrees. Thus, the null hypothesis of this T-test can be rejected and the results of all seven questions can be accepted.

From Question 1, it is concluded that compared to teachers without a TESL degree, teachers with a TESL degree are more likely to have the necessary experience as a teacher. From Question 2, most of the participants agree that teachers with a TESL degree will help prepare them to take English tests. From Question 3, participants show that teachers with TESL degree will more likely to help prepare them to speak English abroad. From Question 4, participants feel more motivated to learn English with teachers with TESL degrees. From Question 5, it is concluded that teachers with TESL degrees are more qualified in the participants' perceptions to improve English conversation skills. Question 6 reveals that teachers with TESL degrees are more qualified in helping the participants' English writing skills compare to the ones without TESL degrees. Question 7 shows that candidates with TESL degrees is well suited as an English teacher in the university in Shanxi, China.

Chart 4.3: With vs. Without TESL Degree



A conclusion can be reached from the T-test above, that is, the participants recognize that a TESL degree is essential in evaluating teaching candidates. Based on the information provided in CVs, teaching candidates with TESL degrees received more positive feedbacks from the participants than candidates without TESL degrees regardless of their experiences as a teacher. Participants react more favorably toward teaching candidates with TESL degrees in English tests preparation assistance, in improving the participants' English-speaking skills, in motivating their interest in English learning, and in improving their English conversation and writing skills. Participants believe that teaching candidates with TESL degrees are more likely to perform well in the teaching position.

#### **T-Test 4: More Experience vs. Less Experience**

Test 4 is performed to analyze whether the related experiences of candidates have contributed to the survey response in the seven questions. Table 5 shows the results of the T-test.



In this test, “more experienced” represents candidates with more than three years of English teaching experience, while “less experienced” represents the candidates with less than three years of English teaching experience.

Table 4.4: More Experienced vs. Less Experienced T-Test Results

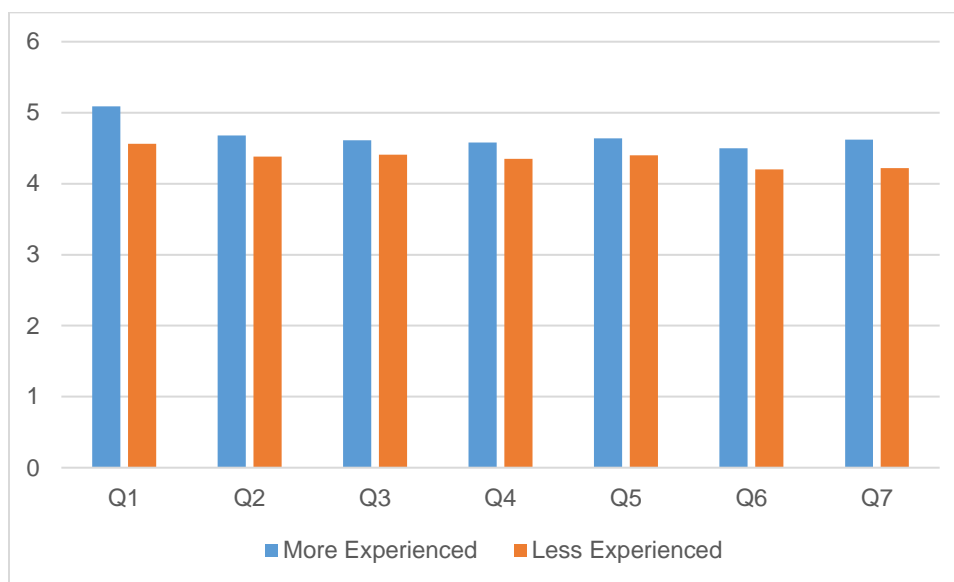
	<i>Teaching Experience</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Q1</i>	More Experienced	1598	5.09	1.004	.025	.000
	Less Experienced	1597	4.56	1.042	.026	.000
<i>Q2</i>	More Experienced	1597	4.68	1.001	.025	.000
	Less Experienced	1597	4.38	.976	.024	.000
<i>Q3</i>	More Experienced	1596	4.61	1.051	.026	.000
	Less Experienced	1596	4.41	1.022	.026	.000
<i>Q4</i>	More Experienced	1596	4.58	1.095	.027	.000
	Less Experienced	1595	4.35	1.016	.025	.000
<i>Q5</i>	More Experienced	1597	4.64	1.111	.028	.000
	Less Experienced	1596	4.40	1.083	.027	.000
<i>Q6</i>	More Experienced	1598	4.50	1.050	.026	.000
	Less Experienced	1595	4.20	1.028	.026	.000
<i>Q7</i>	More Experienced	1597	4.62	1.189	.030	.000
	Less Experienced	1596	4.22	1.148	.029	.000

The T-test shows that all p-values were less than .05, indicating that there were significant differences in means of responses between the candidates who had more than 3 years of teaching experience and the candidates who had less than 3 years of teaching experience. The

null hypothesis for this T-test could be rejected. Responses to all 7 questions are considered valid for the analysis.

From the survey results, participants agree more on teachers who have more than three years teaching experience obtain the necessary experience as a teacher (Q1). Experienced teachers could better help prepare students to take English tests (Q2). Experienced teachers could better help prepare them to speak English abroad (Q3). Participants would be better motivated to learn English with experienced teachers as opposed to inexperienced teachers (Q4). Experienced teachers could better improve English conversation skills (Q5). Participants are more confident to say that experienced teachers would improve their English writing skills (Q6). Finally, participants are more confident to say that the more experienced teachers are better suited as an English teacher in the university (Q7).

Chart 4.4: More Experienced vs. Less Experienced



A conclusion can be reached from the T-test above, that is, the students' attitude toward experienced teachers versus less experienced teachers do influence the hiring practices. Based on the information provided in CVs, candidates who have over 3 years of teaching experience received more positive feedback from the participants than candidates without at least 3 years of teaching experience regarding necessary experience as a teacher, in English tests preparation assistance, in improving the participants' English-speaking skills, in motivating their interest in English learning, and in improving their English conversation and writing skills. Participants also believe that candidates with 3 years of teaching experiences or more perform better in a teaching position.

#### **ANOVA-Test: Race**

A one-way ANOVA-test is performed to analyze whether race of the candidates have contributed to the survey response in the seven questions. The ANOVA-test is performed instead of a T-test since there are more than two categories involved.

Again, the facial appearance of the teacher candidates is divided into three categories: Chinese-looking, White, and Others. The definition of the categories was further detailed in Section 3.4 of this paper. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 are the results of the ANOVA-test.

Table 4.5: ANOVA Test for Race

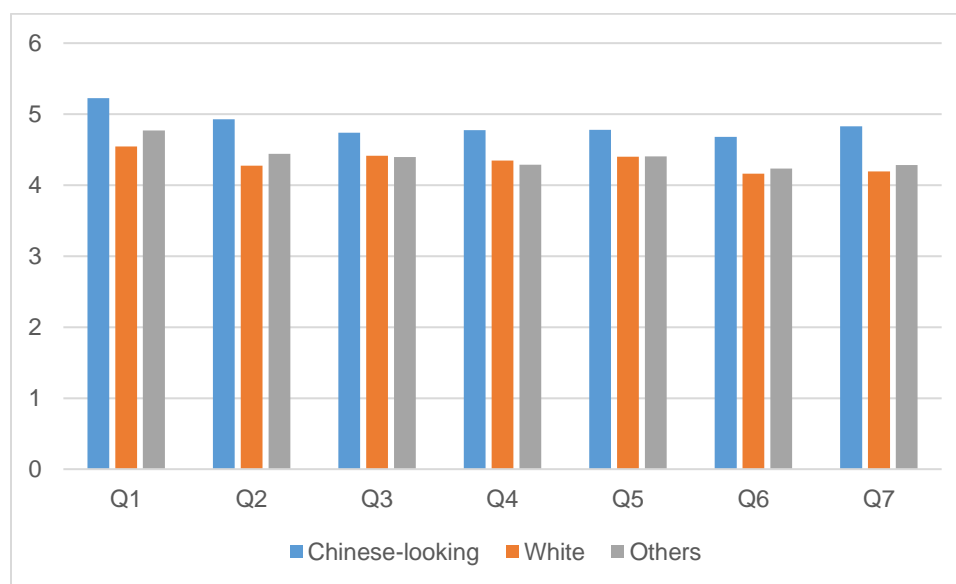
		<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
<i>Q1</i>	Between Groups	258.979	2	129.489	124.811	0.000
	Within Groups	3311.652	3192	1.037		
	Total	3570.631	3194	1.118		
<i>Q2</i>	Between Groups	241.854	2	120.927	130.634	0.000
	Within Groups	2953.880	3191	0.926		
	Total	3195.734	3193	1.001		
<i>Q3</i>	Between Groups	76.564	2	38.282	36.043	0.000
	Within Groups	3387.095	3189	1.062		
	Total	3463.659	3191	1.085		
<i>Q4</i>	Between Groups	143.130	2	71.565	65.939	0.000
	Within Groups	3459.993	3188	1.085		
	Total	3603.124	3190	1.130		
<i>Q5</i>	Between Groups	96.540	2	48.270	40.667	0.000
	Within Groups	3786.447	3190	1.187		
	Total	3882.987	3192	1.216		
<i>Q6</i>	Between Groups	163.750	2	81.875	77.906	0.000
	Within Groups	3352.535	3190	1.051		
	Total	3516.285	3192	1.102		
<i>Q7</i>	Between Groups	247.632	2	123.816	93.228	0.000
	Within Groups	4236.651	3190	1.328		
	Total	4484.282	3192	1.405		

Table 4.6: Statistical Data for Each Race

	<i>Groups</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
<i>Q1</i>	Chinese-looking	997	5.227	0.935	0.032
	White	1198	4.543	1.031	0.029
	Others	1000	4.769	1.082	0.032
<i>Q2</i>	Chinese-looking	996	4.926	0.927	0.030
	White	1198	4.275	0.955	0.028
	Others	1000	4.439	1.005	0.030
<i>Q3</i>	Chinese-looking	996	4.740	1.041	0.033
	White	1196	4.416	0.993	0.030
	Others	1000	4.395	1.064	0.033
<i>Q4</i>	Chinese-looking	997	4.774	1.048	0.033
	White	1195	4.345	0.988	0.030
	Others	999	4.290	1.096	0.033
<i>Q5</i>	Chinese-looking	996	4.778	1.047	0.035
	White	1197	4.400	1.082	0.031
	Others	1000	4.406	1.140	0.034
<i>Q6</i>	Chinese-looking	997	4.679	1.022	0.032
	White	1196	4.162	1.004	0.030
	Others	1000	4.233	1.053	0.032
<i>Q7</i>	Chinese-looking	997	4.830	1.157	0.036
	White	1197	4.194	1.120	0.033
	Others	999	4.284	1.187	0.036

The ANOVA-test shows that all p-values were less than .05, indicating that there were significant differences in means of responses between the candidates of different races: Chinese-looking, White, and teachers of Other Races. The null hypothesis for this test are rejected for all questions. Responses to all 7 questions are considered valid for the analysis. From the survey results, students preferred teachers who are Chinese-looking more. Surprisingly, White teachers are the least preferred of the three groups except for Questions 3 and 4, where the group has some advantages compared to teachers of Other Races.

Chart 4.5: Comparison between Races



A closer look into the teacher groups revealed an unintentional trait in their credentials:

Table 4.7: Breakdown of Teachers' Credentials by Race, Persons

	<i>White candidates meeting criteria</i>	<i>Chinese-looking candidates meeting criteria</i>	<i>Other Non-White candidates meeting criteria</i>
<i>Core-country</i>	3	2	3
<i>Native English speaker</i>	3	2	3
<i>TESL Degree</i>	2	4	2
<i>Teaching Experience &gt;3 years</i>	1	3	4
<i>Total Number of Candidates</i>	6	5	5

Table 4.8: Breakdown of Teachers' Credentials by Race, Percentage

	<i>White candidates meeting criteria</i>	<i>Chinese-looking candidates meeting criteria</i>	<i>Other candidates meeting criteria</i>
<i>Core-country</i>	50.0%	40.0%	60.0%
<i>Native English speaker</i>	50.0%	40.0%	60.0%
<i>TESL Degree</i>	33.3%	80.0%	40.0%
<i>Teaching Experience &gt;3 years</i>	16.7%	60.0%	80.0%
<i>Total Number of Candidates</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Overall, only 33.3% of White teacher candidates have TESL degree compared to Chinese-looking (80.0%) and teacher candidates of other races (40.0%). The percentage is lower for White teacher candidates with teaching experiences over 3 years.

The breakdown of credentials above suggested that the participants' preferences for Chinese-looking teacher candidates may be influenced by teaching experiences and the type of degrees held by the teacher candidates, which are significantly higher than White teacher candidates.

As a result, participants' preferences of English teachers by race is deemed to be inconclusive.

## Chapter 5: Discussions and Conclusions

The researcher predicted that the biased job qualifications could be the results of student bias to teacher candidates. However, the researcher found that the student perceptions based on the survey does not perfectly match the job qualifications for ESL teachers in China. As forecasted, the questionnaire results exhibited that the native language plays a significant role in how Chinese college students evaluate teacher candidates. In other words, the study demonstrated in what manner a teacher's native language affects the student's perceptions of the teaching skills of an English teacher. NESTs scored higher from the questionnaire responses compared to NNESTs, particularly in Question 3 and Question 5 regarding assistance on speaking English abroad and conversational skills.

As far as racial appearance is concerned, the researcher predicted that the participants would prefer White teachers. However, based on the analysis on the survey response, the researcher could not, with a high level of certainty, conclude if the participants have any preferences toward a certain race appearance.

Participants understand that acquiring a TESL degree, as well as adequate teaching experiences are very important criterion for performing well in an English teaching profession. On the contrary, school administrators do not emphasize them during the hiring process.

In student's perceptions, teachers from core countries have advantage in teaching conversational skills. Excluding that, teachers from non-core countries are preferred.

To take away from the study, all English language educators should be proficient in English regardless of their native languages. More professional development support is required for NNESTs in China, especially proficiency in English speaking. Professional development



would also be required by NESTs to understand the teaching objectives of English in China. Teaching skills, classroom management, teaching experience, and professional preparation should be given as much weight as language proficiency.

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### Appendix: Student Questionnaire

Pretend you are hiring English Teacher for your university next year. With that in mind, please look at the applicants and answer the questions below.



Candidate 1

Native language: English  
 Nationality: New Zealand  
 Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL Degree  
 English teaching experience: 5 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 2

Native language: English

Nationality: Australia

Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL Degree

English teaching experience: 0 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						





## Candidate 3

Native language: English

Nationality: U.K.

Highest degree completed: B.A. Art

English teaching experience: 4 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 4

Native language: English

Nationality: U.S.

Highest degree completed: B.A. Business

English teaching experience: 0 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 5

Native language: English

Nationality: Malaysia

Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL

English teaching experience: 5 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 6

Native language: English

Nationality: The Philippines

Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL

English teaching experience: 1 year

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 7

Native language: English

Nationality: India

Highest degree completed: Linguistics (Chinese)

English teaching experience: 5 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 8

Native language: English

Nationality: Spain

Highest degree completed: B.A. Communication

English teaching experience: 1 year

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 9

Native language: French

Nationality: Canada

Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL

English teaching experience: 8 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 10

Native language: Spanish

Nationality: Canada

Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL

English teaching experience: 0 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						





## Candidate 11

Native language: Somali

Nationality: U.S.

Highest degree completed: East Asian Studies

English teaching experience: 5 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 12

Native language: Chinese

Nationality: Canada

Highest degree completed: M.S. Special Education

English teaching experience: 0 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 13

Native language: Chinese

Nationality: China

Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL

English teaching experience: 7 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 14

Native language: Chinese

Nationality: China

Highest degree completed: M.A. TESL

English teaching experience: 2 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 15

Native language: Italian

Nationality: Italy

Highest degree completed: M.A. Education

English teaching experience: 7 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						



## Candidate 16

Native language: French

Nationality: France

Highest degree completed: Chinese Culture Studies

English teaching experience: 0 years

Study the CV of the candidate. Put an x on the box according to what you think.

(*ED: Extremely Disagree; D: Disagree; SD: Somewhat Disagree; SA: Somewhat Agree; A: Agree; EA: Extremely Agree*)

		<i>ED</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>EA</i>
<i>Q1</i>	This teacher has the necessary experience as a teacher.						
<i>Q2</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to take English tests.						
<i>Q3</i>	This teacher will help prepare me to speak English abroad.						
<i>Q4</i>	I will be motivated to learn English with this teacher.						
<i>Q5</i>	This teacher will improve my English conversation skills.						
<i>Q6</i>	This teacher will help improve my English writing skills.						
<i>Q7</i>	This teacher is well suited as an English teacher in our university.						